

Calm Before the Storm

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Summary: Sometimes life just drifts along, and no one notices when the clouds start to close in.

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By Jaye Reid.

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Tom turned the key, and then twisted the doorknob to make sure the front door of his house was locked. It was.

He stepped off his front porch into the bright morning light. It was going to be a beautiful spring day in Mt. Thomas. He looked at his car keys, and, smiling, put them in his pocket. He decided, uncharacteristically on the spur of the moment, to walk.

It wasn't a short journey he thought, as he closed the gate behind him. He had promised Nell, when they were a newly married couple, that they would find a house away from the Station. To separate their lives from the Police force. But hell, if the Boss couldn't arrive late for once, what was the point of being the Boss!

He grinned to himself as he strolled along the footpath. He was glad Dash McKinley wasn't there to see him arrive late. He wished he had a dollar for everytime he had chastised her for tardiness. He would be a wealthy man. Not to say he didn't miss the girl. He did. Sometimes

he felt like walking into the main office and saying "McKinley my office, NOW!" just for the hell of it. But he was sure they would think him crazy. Stewart would probably have him committed, just so he could take over as Sgt. Ah, yes, Stewart, he thought as he waited for a car to pass so he could cross the street. He finally seemed to be fitting in. He wasn't sure how it would work out. Detectives rarely accepted going back into uniform, especially when they weren't given a choice. He seemed to have the respect and friendship of the other Officers. Although P.J. still seemed to treat him with a fair amount of suspicion. But, then again, that *was* P.J.

Tom stopped for a few minutes. Damn, this was further than he realised. He *had* walked this journey many times over the years, but perhaps he had over indulged on those vanilla slices a bit too much of late. The thought of cutting back on them didn't thrill him either. They were really his only weakness these days.

Got to keep going he told himself. At this rate he wouldn't be there before lunchtime. And he remembered that P.J. wanted to see him about something. P.J. had taken him aside in the Imperial last night. He had looked pretty pleased with himself, and come to think of it, so had Maggie. Perhapsâ€|â€|. well, maybe it was good news. Now that their relationship was out in the open they may have decided to make it more permanent. After thinking he had lost Maggie, Tom didn't think P.J. would waste too much time making sure she didn't get away from him again. They were rare. It wasn't often that a couple worked so well together. He hoped it continued this way. He dreaded the thought of having to ever split them up as a working team. They complimented each other so well.

Nearly there, he thought. Only a couple of blocks. As he reached the park, he decided to sit down on the park bench. Perhaps he could get P.J. to drive him home tonight. People power-walked past. God they looked fit. Nell used to come with him some days when he used to walk to the Station. Just to keep him company. The walk didn't seem so far back then.

At the Station, Maggie looked at the clock. It wasn't like the Boss to be late. She knew that P.J. was going to tell him, and she was impatient to hear his reaction.

P.J. came out of the C.I. office and looked from Ben to Maggie.

"Boss still not in?" he asked.

"No," she replied. "It's not like him to sleep in."

"Ah, " said P.J. with a wryly grin, "perhaps he got lucky last night."

"P.J.!" exclaimed Maggie, rolling her eyes at his comment.

"What did I say?" he asked with a pretence of innocence. "He's a bloke, and us blokes have needs. Isn't that right Benny boy?"

Ben looked at Maggie. "I think I have forgotten," he replied.

Maggie ignored him, and turned her attention to P.J.

"What you need I think Detective, is a cold shower!" she laughed.

"Only if you bring the towel," P.J. replied cheekily.

The conversation was getting too much for Ben, he decided to change the subject. "Perhaps I'll give the Boss a call," he said, going to pick up the phone.

"Nah, that's okay Ben, Mags and I are heading out. We'll call past his house on the way," replied P.J.

Maggie grabbed her hat and smiled at P.J. She was relieved to get out of the office.

It was Maggie who noticed the Boss sitting in the park. P.J. had driven passed, but swung the car back around and parked.

They both looked across at him sitting there. The look on Maggie's face said it all to P.J. He gently squeezed her hand, before getting out of the car.

Maggie sat there in the car. Tears welled up in her eyes as she watched him walk over to the Boss. P.J. stood there, talking to him. He knelt down and then the sign from him she most dreaded. He stood, looked toward her and gave a simple shake of his head.

As tears started to trickle down her cheeks, she reached for the radio.

"VKC this is Mt. Thomas 509, we need an Ambulance at the Botanical Gardens. Tell them there is no need to hurry!"

The End.

End
file.